

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

- 1 1. A method of multicasting program content, said method comprising:
2 providing encrypted program content for distribution to a client as part
3 of a multicast distribution;
4 providing a key for use by said client in decrypting a first portion of
5 said encrypted program content; and
6 distributing a first portion of said encrypted program content to said
7 client as part of said multicast distribution, wherein said first portion of said encrypted
8 program content is encrypted so as to be decrypted by said client using said key so as to
9 obtain a free preview of said program content.
- 1 2. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said providing a key
2 comprises providing a content key for use by said client in decrypting said first portion of
3 said encrypted program content.
- 1 3. The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising
2 providing a free preview key; and
3 providing said free preview key to said client prior to said distributing
4 said first portion of said encrypted program content.
- 1 4. The method as described in claim 3 and further comprising
2 providing a content key;
3 encrypting said content key with said free preview key; and
4 providing said encrypted content key to said client.
- 1 5. The method as described in claim 1 and further comprising:
2 offering to said client said free preview of said program content.
- 1 6. The method as described in claim 5 and further comprising:

2 providing a user interface for use by said client in purchasing said
3 program content.

1 7. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said free preview
2 comprises a movie trailer.

1 8. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said free preview
2 comprises an advertisement for said program content.

1 9. The method as described in claim 1 wherein said program content
2 comprises a movie and wherein said free preview is comprised of the beginning of said
3 movie.

1 10. A method of multicasting program content, said method comprising:
2 providing program content for distribution to a client as part of a
3 multicast distribution;

4 distributing a first portion of said program content to said client in an
5 unencrypted format so as to provide a free preview of said program content;

6 encrypting a remaining portion of said program content;

7 distributing said encrypted remaining portion of said program content
8 to said client.

1 11. The method as described in claim 10 and further comprising:

2 providing a key; and

3 utilizing said key to accomplish said encrypting said remaining portion
4 of said program content.

1 12. The method as described in claim 11 and further comprising:

2 allowing said client to purchase said program content;

3 providing said client with a key operable to decrypt said encrypted
4 program content after said client purchases said program content.

1 13. A method of providing program content to a plurality of clients in a
2 multicast system, said method comprising:

3 providing a server for communication with a plurality of client
4 computers;

5 configuring said server so as to be operable to provide said program
6 content to said plurality of client computers;

7 providing a free preview of said program content to said plurality of
8 client computers; and

9 during said free preview, providing each purchasing client computer
10 with a key operable to decrypt at least a portion of an encrypted portion of said program
11 content.

1 14. The method of claim 13 and further comprising:

2 providing said free preview for a period of time sufficient to allow a
3 predetermined number of said purchasing client computers to receive said keys operable for
4 decrypting said encrypted portion of said program content.

1 15. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions
2 for performing a method comprising:

3 providing encrypted program content for distribution to a client as part
4 of a multicast distribution;

5 providing a key for use by said client in decrypting a first portion of
6 said encrypted program content; and

7 distributing a first portion of said encrypted program content to said
8 client as part of said multicast distribution, wherein said first portion of said encrypted
9 program content is encrypted so as to be decrypted by said client using said key so as to
10 obtain a free preview of said program content.

1 16. The computer readable medium as described in claim 15 wherein said
2 providing a key comprises providing a content key for use by said client in decrypting said
3 first portion of said encrypted program content.

1 17. The computer readable medium as described in claim 15 and further
2 comprising:

3 providing a free preview key; and

4 providing said free preview key to said client prior to said distributing
5 said first portion of said encrypted program content.

1 18. The computer readable medium as described in claim 15 and further
2 comprising:

3 providing a content key;

4 encrypting said content key with said free preview key; and

5 providing said encrypted content key to said client.

1 19. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions
2 for performing a method comprising:

3 providing program content for distribution to a client as part of a
4 multicast distribution;

5 distributing a first portion of said program content to said client in an
6 unencrypted format so as to provide a free preview of said program content;

7 encrypting a remaining portion of said program content;

8 distributing said encrypted remaining portion of said program content
9 to said client.

1 20. A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions
2 for performing a method comprising:

3 providing a server for communication with a plurality of client
4 computers;
5 configuring said server so as to be operable to provide said program
6 content to said plurality of client computers;
7 providing a free preview of said program content to said plurality of
8 client computers; and
9 during said free preview, providing each purchasing client computer
10 with a key operable to decrypt at least a portion of an encrypted portion of said program
11 content.
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